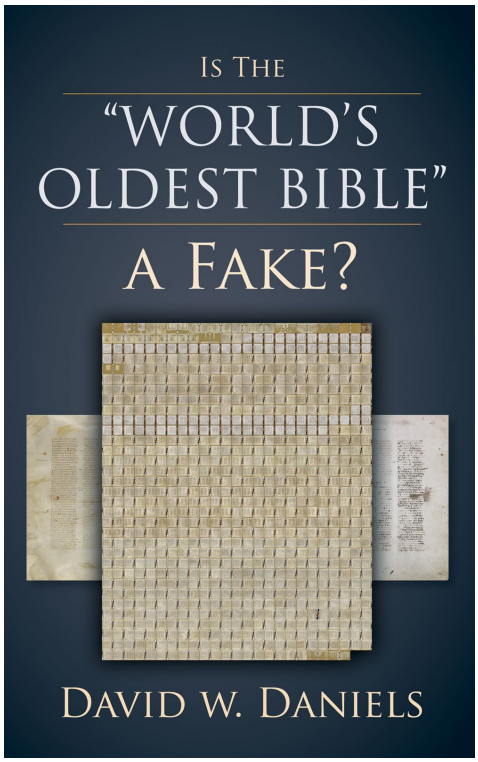
Unpublished book review:

Note: I have attempted (loosely) to write this review in an informal style similar to the one Daniels uses in his book because in one sense, he and I have the same desired audience.



David W. Daniels, *Is the "World's Oldest Bible" a Fake?* Ontario, CA: Chick Publications, 2017.

352 pp.

$16.95 paperback/$9.99 ebook

Available here, but I don't recommend it: https://www.chick.com/catalog/books/1442.asp

If you couldn't tell from the scare quotes around the words "World's Oldest Bible" in the title of the book, let me ruin the plot for you: the author thinks that Codex Sinaiticus is a modern production, made during the 1840s. This position is complete nonsense, and the book is full of the kinds of infuriating logic that only works if you're both already convinced of the author's position and also committed to being one-sided with the evidence. The kinds of arguments Daniels makes would devastate his own case if he were forced to answer the same kinds of questions he asks. In some cases, what Daniels does *not* mention in his book is more significant than what he does—if you read this book, this thought should be kept in mind.

There are some detailed reviews out there (Bill Brown's review at the link in the footnote,[1] but also search academia.edu for Kevin McGrane's review), so I do not need to repeat what has already been said—I skimmed them both a while back, but what I say here, I say without following along with either of them. Any overlap is purely accidental. I'm sure Steven Avery will quickly write a post about how I've just missed the point over at his purebibleforum, and I'm sure it will sound convincing if you are already convinced that I'm wrong about this. Please don't be misled. Weigh the information yourself and ask yourself if Daniels does a decent job proving his case. Don't take his word on it—he asks you himself to examine the evidence (p. 12: "Please, check the facts all you want").

[1] https://www.tapatalk.com/groups/bibleversiondiscussionboard/book-review-is-the-world-s-oldest-bible-a-fake-t6032.html#p73085

Daniels begins by denying the power of the Gospel, asking (p. 9) "Would God have withheld the truth for 1800 years, only to have it show up in an Orthodox monastery in the desert?"—as if the Gospel can only be found in a perfect reproduction of the original text. Never mind what Paul wrote, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us" (2 Cor. 4:7). Daniels then asks (p. 9), "Would He have His people see only a typeset text that covers up thousands of erasures, write-overs, marginal notes and optional readings?" A "typeset text that covers up thousands of erasures, write-overs, marginal notes and optional readings" sounds *exactly* like the *textus receptus* to me.

Daniels also sets out how he came to this question (p. 12):

> "I woke up one morning and went into prayer, as I usually do. Then I heard these words: '***What if they're fakes?***" And I saw a mental image of Codex Sinaiticus and Codex Vaticanus."
>
> [later on the same page]
>
> "A few weeks later, during devotions, the thought came to my heart: 'Simple answers to even simpler questions.'
> And then one more event really got me started. I prayed and asked God, 'What question should I ask?'
> And I heard, 'What color is it?'
> And that was the beginning of all that you are about to read. Please, check the facts all you want."

So there you have it: Daniels claims that God revealed this line of inquiry to him spiritually. I'm not one to argue with God himself, but I relay another story about God speaking to people: My pastor growing up once told me that a stranger showed up at our church one Sunday morning and told him "God told me I am supposed to preach here today!" My pastor replied, "That's nice, but he didn't mention it to me, so you're not preaching."

I can't judge what Daniels did or did not hear, but I know that Jesus commands us to love the Lord our God with all our heart, mind, soul and strength. This review flows from my desire to love the lord with all my *mind*—to test what Daniels has written against my experience with manuscripts and with doing research.

I. Daniels' "22 Facts"

For the main part of my review, let me briefly respond to Daniels' "22 Facts" that make up Chapter 27, "The Evidence", which is the first part of "Section IV: The Bible Version Conspiracy." These facts are mostly summaries of other discussions throughout the book, so they draw heavily on what Daniels wrote elsewhere. As they are succinct summaries, however, I think they are a good starting point for a review. Assume any irregularities in grammar or bold/italics within quoted material is original to Daniels; I have tried to preserve it exactly as written, with the exception of the placement of a few paragraph breaks, as Daniels' writing style is preachy, and one-

sentence paragraphs are not uncommon. At times, I respond to Daniels' longer discussions earlier in the book, on which these 'facts' are based.

1. "**Someone darkened Sinaiticus!**" (p. 255). This is just not true at all. Remember, Daniels and his crew have no experience with manuscripts. They don't have the years of experience and training to know what is and is not normal in an ancient document. They are working off digital images and descriptions made by others, which they interpret without the background knowledge of what is/is not a normal way of describing things. Daniels perceives a difference in colour between the Leipzig leaves and the British Library leaves as posted on the website, codexsinaiticus.org. *However, he does not deal with the one true fact*—that the colour standards for those respective leaves do not match, which proves that the images were taken and/or processed differently. They are not true representatives of the actual colour of the manuscript.

[[Steven Avery and others have attempted to respond to this objection, but they miss the point: the colour standards are there in the photos to indicate whether or not the images are taken to the same specs. The colour standards do not match, so therefore the images available do not represent the codex's true colouring. Any arguments made on the basis of colouring are on incredibly unstable ground without matching colour standards, because they can only speculate how much of a difference there really is between the folios—if any.]]

Even if the images were true representatives of the colour of Codex Sinaiticus, Daniels does not deal with the fact that different storage conditions can result in different colours of the pieces. Simply look at the reconstructions of the Coptic fragments from the White Monastery for examples of this phenomenon.

This is the sort of mistake one would make if he or she had never looked at a real manuscript before but was determined to find any "evidence" that undermined a New Testament text that disagrees with the KJV.

2. "**Tischendorf lied about how he got the Sinaiticus**!" (p. 256). This one is true. I'm not going to argue here. If my memory of the conference is correct, I first heard about this from Dan Wallace at the 2013 Southeast regional ETS meeting.

3. "**Sinaiticus is not even a trustworthy copy!**" (p. 257). Daniels point here is that he thinks there are too many corrections or mistakes for it to be a 'real' manuscript. This statement betrays the fact that Daniels does not know how ancient New Testament manuscripts 'worked', nor does he know the ways they were and could have been used, and he does not know how corrections/mistakes were/were not tolerated in manuscripts. There are a lot of nonsense errors in a lot of manuscripts that went uncorrected—not just Codex Sinaiticus. Daniels would do well to show other examples of the kinds of corrections and mistakes that can appear in manuscripts, but he does not (and indeed, doing so would undermine this 'fact'!).

4. "**Sinaiticus sections were colored differently.**" (p. 258). This is just a re-hash of the first "fact", except this one has a picture with the added note, "I've enhanced the colors to show you on a photo" (p. 258). Just think about that for a minute. Daniels' 'proof' that they are different colors is a photo that he *doctored*—and admitted he did it.

Now, Daniels claims that he only doctored the photos to show the readers more clearly what are there in the color images, because the photos in the book are black and white—the color differences don't show up as well. However, Daniels criticizes Hendrickson (p. 89–90) for doing the same thing in the Sinaiticus facsimile. They say that they adjusted the photos in order to better represent the appearance in real life. Daniels calls that a cover-up from people who have likely seen the real manuscript, but he has no problems doing the same thing himself despite the fact that he's never seen it (to my knowledge) and by that standard, doesn't know what it looks like in real life.

Daniels writes (p. 90): "The evidence shows me that the original, handwritten Sinaiticus, no matter its age, was snow white with dark lettering. But that didn't look as old as men wanted. So men aged it. And the publishers of this very expensive book also changed the color of the pages so they would all match. I cannot think of a single godly reason why they would change it."

5. "**You can't tell by looking which is and isn't Scripture.**" (p. 260). Basically this is just the "too many corrections" argument ('fact' 3) stated differently. There are two problems here. 1. This objection is completely irrelevant to the authenticity of a manuscript. 2. If it were relevant, Daniels would have to throw out pretty much every manuscript that supports the KJV as well (and let's not forget that Stephanus gave marginal readings from Codex Bezae in his edition of the *textus receptus*). Nearly all of the manuscripts I've seen bigger than small fragments have corrections in them, so which is the right text? The correction or the uncorrected text? This is a great example of how one-sided Daniels' evidence is. If you made the same logical demands on manuscripts supporting the KJV, they'd never stand up.

6. "**Some whole sections were changed.**" (p. 260). Daniels is referring to replacement leaves written by Scribe D to replace text copied by Scribe A. Again, this objection is completely irrelevant to a manuscript's authenticity. Some manuscripts have replacement leaves. Some have replacement leaves added much later than the original production (like Codex Bezae: https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-NN-00002-00041/677 or Codex Vaticanus).

7. "**Sinaiticus could *not* possibly be one of the Bibles made for Emperor Constantine in the early 300s AD.**" (p. 261). Does anyone still think that it was one of them? Skeat thought that, didn't he? I wasn't aware that the Sinaiticus-50 Bibles theory still had many adherents. (Note: see my later discussion at III.2 in this review, because what Daniels' doesn't mention in his book is a significant problem).

Even still, it is completely irrelevant to the authenticity of Sinaiticus. How many 4th century New Testaments do we have, and how many were ever thought to be part of the 50 Bibles Eusebius wrote about? I'm decently sure we have a few New Testament manuscripts that are genuinely that old but were not part of Constantine's order.

Moreover, one of Daniels' objections (p. 125) is that Sinaiticus was not "bound in beautiful leather." Daniels writes, "In fact, from the time in 1859 when Tischendorf brought it out of Egypt, it had NO covers at all! So no one could check to see if it were a beautiful, ancient bound text or a modern counterfeit." This is not an

argument; it's an admission of ignorance. Incredibly few original bindings survive from the fourth century, and it was unbelievably common to re-bind manuscripts in modern binding. If Daniels had broader manuscript experience, he should know these facts.

8. "**Sinaiticus has unique mistakes in place names.**" (261). This objection is interesting, I'll admit. However, it is at this point that Daniels uses 2 Tim. 4:10 to throw Tischendorf under the bus. The variant in question is Γαλατίαν (nearly all mss) / Γαλλίαν (01 C04 81 104 436 459 *l*147 *l*596 plus minor versional and patristic witnesses, according to the UBS5). Daniels is probably working with Metzger's *Textual Commentary* because he cites the evidence as 01 C04 81 104 326 436 (p. 135). The UBS 5 leaves out 326, but it adds in three other manuscripts. He makes a point that many of the manuscripts with this reading were linked to Tischendorf, suggesting that Tischendorf was the reason this reading was "chosen" for Sinaiticus—the modern makers wanted to give him something he would like. That case breaks down when we see that this is a reading that is interesting enough to merit mention in the UBS5 apparatus and see that there is other ancient attestation.

Daniels also appeals to the variant in Acts 8:5 in his treatment of this 'fact' earlier in the book. Dirk Jongkind demonstrates that this reading is a harmonization to context, specifically to the text not-yet-copied, and that this is a noticeable tendency in Codex Sinaiticus (*Scribal Habits,* p. 253), but Daniels does not mention this at all. Either he's cherry-picking data or he genuinely is not aware of research done on the variants he's writing about. Both possibilities are problematic, and either way, there is a good explanation of the phenomenon, consistent with ancient manuscript production, that Daniels does not report.

9. "**Sinaiticus can't be as old as they say it is.**" (p. 262). Here, Daniels takes a statement by Porphyry Uspensky as fact, which in turn 'proves' that Sinaiticus had to have been written after 446 AD. Daniels also gets into an argument from Simonides' edition of the *Shepherd of Hermas*, which is its own can of worms. I'm not convinced here, but the important part—perhaps the most remarkable statement in the whole book (and that is saying something!)—comes in this section. I quote Daniels in full:

> 'On another note, throughout the centuries, lots of copies of scripture were found, which were quite different from the Sinaiticus. But starting after the "discovery" of Sinaiticus, suddenly the vast majority of 20th century finds mostly matched Sinaiticus. Is that a coincidence?
>
> Or could counterfeiters have just gotten much better — maybe trained to do just that, and paid to do this by some big group with a big goal in mind?' (p. 263).

Wow. If you've read much of Daniels' work, you'll know that the one big goal he has in mind is the One World Religion, which is a vast conspiracy by the Roman Catholic Church and others to suppress the Gospel and God's Word. *And here, Daniels is suggesting the possibility that the reason the Oxyrhynchus papyri and other manuscripts that have been discovered since 1840 often have text closer to Sinaiticus than to the* textus receptus *is because they're all fakes.*

On a side note, Daniels is not the only KJV-onlyist who has gone down this road. I heard Jack Moorman, an American-born missionary in London, give a talk for the Dean Burgon Society meeting this year in which he said he was sure P75 was a fake produced to support Codex Vaticanus, which itself was obviously a more recent production by the Roman Catholic Church.

10. "**Sinaiticus and Vaticanus do not agree —so they could not be what Constantine wanted**." (p. 263). See my comments on 'fact' 7. Also, it is unclear what would meet Daniels' requirements for agreeing/disagreeing. I don't know that *any* two manuscripts agree completely in that way, especially any two full copies of the whole New Testament. How many disagreements can two manuscripts have before one has to be discarded? What is the number? And which one of the two should be discarded? How do we tell?

11. "**The text-critical scholars accepted Tischendorf's early date for Sinaiticus, no questions asked.**" (p. 263). This statement is demonstrably wrong. For a discussion on how the dates have been disputed, see pp. 18–21 in Dirk Jongkind's *Scribal Habits of Codex Sinaiticus*. I think Daniels might be confusing "coming to relatively the same conclusions as Tischendorf" with "accepting Tischendorf's early date, no questions asked." I have seen this line of thinking before with Daniels' crew—lumping in everyone who would have an initial text similar to Westcott and Hort's as just blindly following Hort, regardless of whether or not one actually accepts or rejects their reasoning on any given point. It's easier to lead your readers on with guilt-by-association accusations and *ad hominem* attacks than to read the scholarship and present it accurately and fairly, and we can hope that this isn't happening here. I am not completely convinced it isn't though.

12. "**Bible making is big business.**" (p. 263). This 'fact' is a moot point, because it's not a fact about Sinaiticus. In fact, it goes both ways. Daniels charges money for his books, as far as I know (I personally paid for two copies of this one: a physical copy and the ebook). If KJV-onlyists want to make the claim that modern Bible versions are all in it for the money, then I suggest they put their money where their mouths are and offer all their books for free, relying solely on donations. It should also be mentioned that images of Codex Sinaiticus (as well as Vaticanus, Bezae, Washingtonianus, and a large number of other manuscripts) are all available online completely for free, but they cost money to be digitized, because you have to pay for the equipment and pay people to do it. Institutions actually lose money by digitizing manuscripts themselves rather than relying on a charity like the Center for the Study of New Testament Manuscripts to digitize for them.

13. "**It is a bold-faced lie that 'none of these [changes] affect any basic doctrine of the Christian faith,**' as Jesuit-educated Norman Geisler and most professors have said. The resurrection of Christ is a basic doctrine. Sinaiticus and Vaticanus do not have Mark 16:9–20." (p. 264).

Now, I actually agree with this one, but only partially. First, I want to point out Daniels' guilt-by-association smear tactic of pointing out that Norman Geisler was "Jesuit-educated". I also want to point out the absurdity of appealing to the Ending of Mark in this context. Both manuscripts (Sinaiticus and Vaticanus) have three other Gospels as well as Acts—all clearly having the resurrection. Even if they did not,

Mark 16:8 clearly ends with an empty tomb. There is no way you could read Sinaiticus or Vaticanus as a codex without encountering the resurrection of Jesus.

Where Daniels and I agree is the language of the statement: "affect". In a very real sense, reduced manuscript attestation can *affect* a doctrine, but it does not *change* it. I think I first heard R.C. Sproul mention this. Without the *Comma Johanneum* in 1 John 5, *we still have the doctrine of the Trinity*, but we do actually lose one of its clearest expressions in what many people consider Scripture. That sentiment would be better-stated as 'no doctrine hangs or falls on a textual variant'.

14. "**All the top Greek scholars were fooled into trusting Category I Codex 2427 of Mark's Gospel, until it was proved to be a fake!**" (p. 264). This is simply not true. I quote Stephen C. Carlson, whom Daniels praises for his work in identifying the exemplar of 2427:[2]

> Doubts about the authenticity of 2427 surfaced early and lingered. For example, Robert P. Casey voiced his suspicion in 1947 that the text could have been derived from a nineteenth century critical edition of the Greek New Testament, and, in the 1970s, Colwell himself endeavored to find such an exemplar for 2427 but to no avail. In 1989, the case in favor of authenticity turned for the worse when it was discovered that 2427's illuminations have been found to contain significant quantities of a modern pigment, Prussian Blue, first synthesized around 1704. Even so, that finding did not settle the question of its curious text because it is conceivable that the illuminations could have been retouched in a naïve attempt at restoration. Nevertheless, the lack of publication of 2427's text has stymied progress on this question. Apart from selected readings in the 1993 edition of the Nestle-Aland critical text (NA27), it was not until this past year that scholars worldwide had convenient access to its text, when Margaret M. Mitchell and Patricia A. Duncan of the University of Chicago published their collation of the text in *Novum Testamentum* and put high-resolution images of the manuscript online, in the hopes of stimulating research into Archaic Mark.

Let me also quote Daniels himself, from p. 193: 'A few people suspected [2427] was possibly a fake. Colwell said, "Everything about 2427 was wrong."' Well, which is it? Did a few people suspect it to be a fake (Daniels on p. 193) or were all the top Greek scholars fooled into trusting it (Daniels on p. 264)?

Daniels also narrates the events essentially as Carlson describes them to show how Carlson identified the exemplar of 2427 as Philipp Buttman's 1860 edition of the New Testament, and the article is freely available online. We cannot say that the information that Casey, Colwell and others had doubts about 2427 was unavailable to Daniels.

Either Daniels does not consider Colwell, Carlson, et al. to be "top Greek scholars", or he is talking out both sides of his mouth. *This is another example where Daniels one-sided reporting is evident: he does not report the parts of the story that hurt his case (here, that some scholars did doubt the authenticity of 2427).*

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[2] Stephen C. Carlson, " "Archaic Mark" (MS 2427) and the Finding of a Manuscript Fake," *SBL Forum* , n.p. [cited Aug 2006]. Online: **http://sbl-site.org/Article.aspx?ArticleID=577**

Even if we grant Daniels' case that 2427 was doubted and used anyway, it is *not* analogous to Codex Sinaiticus. With 2427, the experts knew something looked suspicious. That's why they tested it scientifically. The same cannot be said of Sinaiticus. *The experts do not notice anything suspicious about it. That is why it has never been tested scientifically—there is no credible doubt to its authenticity and therefore no need to spend the time, money and resources doing it, especially when it could damage the manuscript.* Chemical testing is not free. It requires specialist equipment and personnel, and it requires their time.

Daniels gives four sub-points on this 'fact' on p. 265, to which I reply:

1. "**Sinaiticus has *never* been chemically tested.**" I just explained why.
2. "**There is no master copy**". Nor is there an extant exemplar for the vast majority of New Testament manuscripts.
3. "**It has no provenance.** It just 'showed up' in St. Catherine's monastery about 1844." Again, this is par for the course when it comes to New Testament manuscripts. Codex Sinopensis just 'showed up' when an elderly woman sold it in about 1899. Codex Rossanensis just 'showed up' near a cathedral in the 1820s–40s. Nobody doubts either of them. This is a non-argument, despite the misplaced confidence with which Daniels asserts it.
4. "**It has no chain of custody.**" I'm honestly not sure how this differs from the provenance point, but again, this is fairly common with manuscripts.

15. "**Until 2004–2009, almost nobody saw actual pictures of more than a single page of Sinaiticus**." (p. 265). Daniels is referring to the page containing the ending of John, which shows up in several places. Is that the only page though?

Two other pages show up in Cavallo's 1966 work, *Ricerche sulla maiuscola biblica* (f. 268r [1 Cor.] and f. 341r [Hermas]. Kenyon's *Our Bible and the Ancient Manuscripts* (at least the 1958 5th edition) reproduces a page containing text from Luke 22. Metzger's palaeography book has the page with the ending of Luke, which also appears in Aland and Aland's introduction to textual criticism (which Daniels knows about because of their treatment of 2427!). Let's not forget Milne and Skeat's *Scribes and Correctors*, which features numerous plates of sections of the book, often illustrating corrections and other difficult places—the kinds of things Daniels thinks were being intentionally suppressed (p. 210: "Holding back pages like ***this*** [Q36, f. 4r]] tricked us into trusting our teachers").

Maybe Daniels only found one page because he wasn't really looking?

16–17. These two 'facts' are basically a denial of the existence of the Septuagint. Daniels does not understand the kinds of harmonisation that can occur between the LXX and the NT when it quotes the LXX, and he demands a full-length copy of the LXX before the fourth century in order to prove it existed in time to be included in a fourth century Sinaiticus.

This review is already too long. I'll let a Septuagint scholar tackle these points.

18. "**Textual critics make three big mistakes:**" (all p. 267)

1. "**Textual critics judge the scriptures by a rule:** 'the harder reading is to be preferred,' They [*sic*] didn't get this rule from the scriptures, and it contradicts the way God works." If Daniels thinks that modern TC is the blind, universal application of this principle, then he does not understand TC. If that were the case, we'd just have a book of nonsense readings. In reality, it is a balance of a number of factors—this is only one of them.

2. "**Text critics forget the active presence of the Devil**, who wants people to have doubt not faith." Without faith it is impossible to please God, so isn't it entirely consistent with the way God works to leave a few minor places where we have to have faith and trust him, rather than to give us all the answers cleanly and up front (i.e. the KJV without any textual variants whatsoever)?

3. "**Text critics forget the power of God**, whose pattern is to give us exact words...." Wait, where, exactly does this pattern come from? *Do we not have four different-yet-inspired accounts of the Life of Christ in the New Testament itself?*

Daniels is assuming an awful lot here. He adds two 'lessons'—don't judge or change the scriptures, but let them judge and change us.

Daniels must have a fundamental misunderstanding of textual criticism. I don't know a single text critic (who still believes that the original/initial text is worth reconstructing) who wants to judge or change the Scriptures. Rather, we want to *recover* them as they were originally given.

19–22. The rest of Daniels' 'facts' are about the LXX/apocrypha and are not relevant for the authenticity of Sinaiticus.

As you can see, the "facts" are a bunch of poorly-researched leaps to conclusions fueled by a misunderstanding of textual criticism, an unfamiliarity with manuscripts, and a willingness to report only part of the information, neglecting to mention anything that could undermine Daniels' own case.

II. Daniels' Double-Standards

I have already given a few examples of Daniels' double-standards—instances in which he applies unreasonable demands to Codex Sinaiticus that not even the *textus receptus* would pass. I'll re-state a few here and mention some more. This list is by no means exhaustive.

1. Daniels asks (p. 9), "Would He have His people see only a typeset text that covers up thousands of erasures, write-overs, marginal notes and optional readings?" Sounds like he's describing the *textus receptus* to me.

2. P. 42: Daniels writes, citing 1 Cor. 1:18: "You're either saved or lost. And the preaching of the cross marks that dividing line." To me, this is one of the most fundamental issues I have with the book. The rest of the book is basically about how if you don't have the right Bible, then you're driven to doubt and in danger of falling away. How can Daniels affirm (as I would) that the preaching of the cross is the most

important thing, and write a whole book that [effectively!] teaches that the preaching of the cross is secondary to having the right Bible?[3]

One of the researchers Daniels' relied on for this book, Steven Avery, refuses to affirm the classic definition of the Trinity.[4] Normally, doctrinal positions would not be anything worth mentioning in a review, but it merits a mention in this specific case. Daniels builds a case against so-called "Alexandrian" manuscripts because the Alexandrians were "*Apostates*, who went *against* the apostles' teachings" (p. 39) who were "often making changes to reflect their personal ideas and agendas" (p. 43). In other words, "doctrinal purity" is one of the grounds Daniels uses to support the KJV, and heterodoxy (or unorthodoxy) is reason for him to reject manuscripts that do not support the KJV. Remember how Daniels refers to Norman Geisler as "Jesuit-educated Norman Geisler" on p. 264. Keep in mind that vicious *ad hominem* attacks against Westcott and Hort are common in KJV-only literature (for example, see http://www.chick.com/reading/books/157/157_08a.asp). In light of these doctrinal attacks, it becomes relevant to point out Daniels' compromise on doctrine here. To write this book, Daniels is willing to team up with someone who refuses to affirm that Jesus is co-eternal, co-equal, and being of one substance with God the Father. Steven Avery, who refuses to affirm one of the classical orthodox doctrines of Christianity, gets a pass because he supports Daniels overall goal of defending the KJV.

I will gladly retract this criticism of Daniels' doctrinal compromise if Steven Avery will publicly affirm that Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit are co-equal, co-eternal and being of one substance with God the Father; one in essence, God in three persons (God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit).

3. P. 89, Daniels admits that the Hendrickson facsimile of Sinaiticus made "sensitive adjustments" to the colouring "to represent faithfully the actual appearance of the pages." Daniels suggests that the publishers of the facsimile Photoshopped the pages to downplay the differences, despite their explicit statement that the images they had were not accurately reflecting what the manuscript looked like (hence the need for sensitive adjustments). On the flip side, Daniels does the same thing throughout the book, enhancing the black and white images to make the differences in colour more stark.

4. P. 49, in the context of a Manly Hall quote with several ellipses: "Notice all those dots to indicate missing parts? It doesn't inspire confidence in a quote to find a whole lot of information missing." However, Daniels includes no less than *five* ellipses in a Spurgeon quote (Appendix B, pp. 346–347). The point Daniels is trying to make is that Spurgeon repented from using the Revised Version and went back to the KJV before he died. If you check the quote in context, however, you'll see that Spurgeon is speaking out against higher criticism, not lower criticism. Again (in the Spurgeon appendix) we have the problem of Daniels not telling the full story and hiding the information that undermines the point he is trying to make.

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[3] I do grant that Daniels does affirm the primacy of the preaching of the cross (http://www.chick.com/ask/articles/saved.asp), I am only suggesting that his way of arguing his case in this book is inconsistent with that position.

[4] https://www.facebook.com/groups/21209666692/permalink/10152343431531693/ See the questions in the comments at that post where a former member of the group asks Steven Avery specifically where he stands on the Trinity, and Steven Avery persistently refuses to give a direct answer.

5. P. 302, Daniels claims that Sinaiticus "was a brand new 'replica' in the form of some older manuscripts, for the collection of the Tsar of Russia." However, one of Daniels' arguments against Sinaiticus is that there has never been discovered anything quite like it—a full-bible manuscript in four columns with that kind of text. If it was supposed to be a replica of something, it would help to have an example of what kind of original it was replicating. A replica doesn't really work if there's never been anything like it before.

6. Again, Daniels claims to be giving the reader all the evidence, but in reality, he withholds it. He almost never cites sources (see III.6 later in this review).

7. P. 96: "Sinaiticus and Vaticanus have something in common. They were both allegedly under the care of monks or Catholics, and kept hidden from the common Christians for centuries...." Is Daniels describing Sinaiticus and Vaticanus, or is he describing pretty much all of the Scriptures (read: the *textus receptus*) until the Protestant Reformation?

8. P. 68: "Do you trust Scribe A, now? Did he pay attention? Could he even read Greek?" Note: of the 'Sinaiticus Authenticity Research Team', Daniels might be the only member who can read Greek. He frequently appeals to Steven Avery, but as far as I can tell, Avery has never had any training in Greek, nor is he self-taught beyond the alphabet.

9. Daniels presents himself as an impartial collector of evidence, and that the people who insist that Sinaiticus is ancient are the ones whose work and reputations depend on it: (p. 90), Of course, I have no horse in this race. I don't believe Sinaiticus is God's words." And again (p. 91), "I've got nothing to lose by finding this all out [i.e. that Sinaiticus is a fake]. But there are people who have a great deal to lose." Compare these statements with his statement on p. 112: "Brothers and sisters, this is a ***con job!*** And it's only adding insult to injury to say, 'Well you have to match it up with the Vaticanus.' You're kidding. I now have to trust the Whore of Babylon to give me reliable scripture?" It sounds to me that David Daniels has very much to lose from his reputation and position with Chick Publications if Codex Sinaiticus is authentic and it shows that the KJV is not based on the best text of the New Testament.

III. The Low Quality of Daniels' Research

There are plenty of mistakes in the book, not to mention the fact that Daniels often does not cite sources.

1. On p. 315: "Dirk Jongkind, author of the 2013 book *Scribal Habits of Codex Sinaiticus*"—it was actually published in 2007.

2. Daniels is willing to quote someone if he can twist their statement into supporting his position, but he won't mention their own opposition to it. For example, Daniels cites Stan Porter favorably for demonstrating that Tischendorf lied about Codex Sinaiticus, but you'll find no mention that Porter (at one time at least) wanted to use

Codex Sinaiticus as the base text for a diplomatic edition of the Greek NT (see p. 96 in Porter & Pitts, *Fundamentals of New Testament Textual Criticism*).

Perhaps the most egregious example of this double-talk is his appeal to D.C. Parker. Daniels quotes Parker at length on Constantine's order of 50 Bibles, and one of Daniels' arguments against Sinaiticus is that it couldn't be one of those 50 Bibles (see 'fact 7' above). However, when I checked Parker to see if Daniels was citing him responsibly, I found two and a half pages of Parker himself giving all the reasons we can't reliably identify Sinaiticus as one of the fifty manuscripts. *It is not good, ethical or responsible scholarship to cherry-pick quotes that allow you to set up a straw man while ignoring whole discussions in the same cherry-picked work that undermine your point.*

3. I'll just quote this next one in full (p. 178):

> "Everywhere, even in Wikipedia, they will tell you that it was in the 5th century, the 400s AD, that people got the idea that the Gospels should be 'Matthew, Mark, Luke and John,' in that familiar order. They even go on to list what they say are 5th century documents that have that order.
> But what they ***don't tell you,*** *that would hurt their theory*—is that their beloved Sinaiticus and Vaticanus are ***also*** in the order of Matthew, Mark, Luke and John! Shh! Don't tell them I told you. Let them look it up for themselves!"

Has Daniels never read Irenaeus (Haer. 3.1.1)? Origen's commentary on Matthew 1 or homily on Joshua 7:1? Does he not know about the Eusebian apparatus, which was a way of identifying related passages across four Gospels made sometime between 290–340 (and present in Sinaiticus!)? I'll also note that Daniels does not cite any sources to back up his claim about what "[e]verybody...will tell you".

In light of Daniels' one-sided reporting of evidence, his statement "But what they ***don't tell you,*** *that would hurt their theory*" is incredibly ironic. Daniels has been doing this very thing throughout his book.

4. Another indication of Daniels' utter unfamiliarity with what is normal in ancient manuscripts is his treatment of deletion dots at Acts 8:5 (p. 135). Daniels writes about the deletion dots: "It's a great editor's mark, but I can tell you as an author — you don't want editor's marks in your final publication. The first printing of one of my early books had editors' marks in it. But unlike Sinaiticus, we fixed it." *Deletion dots, y'all. Deletion dots.* [Note: I contacted Steven Avery about this matter several months ago, who passed it along to Daniels, who acknowledged the mistake and said he would correct it in future editions.]

5. P. 153: "Please note on the second line here, that Scribe B2 actually started writing ***kai e*** on the previous line, then forgot he wrote it, and started all over again on the next line with the full ***kai epano***. It pays to pay attention." Not only is this a common type of mistake, it occurs at a line break (a common place for such a mistake), and someone *was* paying attention: the first και ε was marked with deletion dots. Daniels doesn't mention the correction or does he seem to know how common this type of mistake is.

6. Daniels *almost never* cites sources. For example, in his chapter on 2427 (pp. 185–201), there are exactly two references cited. They are both references to Aland and Aland's *Text of the New Testament*. However, the meat of this chapter deals with the technical findings of Margaret Mitchell, et al, and Stephen C. Carlson. I'm not disagreeing with Daniels' content at this point, but not citing *anything* to support your case is extremely poor research practice. There are 88 footnotes in this 352 page book, and many of them are references to other chapters within the book or to Daniels' other works. There is *zero* interaction with Dirk Jongkind's *Scribal Habits in Codex Sinaiticus*, other than a mention that Jongkind wrote the book (and even that has the wrong date given). There are no references to Peter Head's article on scribal habits in Mark in Sinaiticus (and cost could not be an issue as it is freely available as a pdf: http://rosetta.reltech.org/TC/v13/Head2008.pdf). There is not a mention of Juan Hernández, Jr.'s monograph on scribal tendencies in Revelation (of which he devotes a whole chapter to Codex Sinaiticus). In short, this book fails to interact at all with some of the recent scholarship on Codex Sinaiticus.

7. Pp. 13–14: Daniels says that undermining the Bible (read: KJV) is Satan's "Plan B" because persecution of real Christians has "been relatively quiet in the last couple of centuries." Does Daniels know nothing of the very real persecution of Christians in China? The Middle East? Egypt? Turkey? Are they not real Christians there? Does their very real persecution not count? When I was in seminary, I read somewhere that more Christians were probably martyred in the last 100 years than in all the previous centuries of Christianity combined.

8. Daniels seems to use text-type language to infer that "Alexandrian" manuscripts come from Alexandria (note: this is bad), and that doctrinal problems in Alexandria mean that we can't trust manuscripts from Alexandria to have the true text (chapter 5). There is so much wrong with that, I don't even know where to begin.

9. Daniels claims that his "first glimpse" of Sinaiticus was in 2004, when he got a copy (or saw a copy) of Tischendorf's 1862 pseudo-facsimile. Daniels writes, (pp. 207–208) that

> "...Tischendorf made up letters for printing that looked like the letters from the Sinaiticus. And he had the fonts made in a bunch of different sizes, and quickly printed up editions of the Sinaiticus—only they were all cleaned up.
>
> We had no idea that we had a typeset copy to look at, and not photographs of the real thing."

Did you catch that? *Daniels admits that in 2004, he couldn't tell the difference between a printed pseudo-facsimile (that contains modern chapter and verse numbers printed at the bottom of each page) and a real ancient manuscript.* And this is the man who wants to you believe that he now can tell the difference between a modern fake manuscript and an ancient fake manuscript better than all the people who have devoted their lives to manuscripts.

IV. Conclusion

In summary, David Daniels demonstrates over and over again that he is agenda-driven by a desire to undermine any opposition to the KJV, he cherry-picks references that he can twist in his favour without giving the full context (or without reporting information from the same works that he cites elsewhere that could undermine his point), and he has effectively zero experience with real manuscripts. *I cannot recommend this book to anyone.*

I have only given a few examples of Daniels' double-standards and poor research practices/mistakes. The reality is that this book is littered with other examples. Nearly every page of my copy has annotations of something I took issue with.

To conclude, I ask a question Daniels asks of Sinaiticus: "Is that your best job?" (ch. 15). Daniels quotes Mal. 1:8: "And if ye offer the blind for sacrifice, *is it* not evil? and if ye offer the lame and sick, *is it* not evil? offer it now unto thy governor; will he be pleased with thee, or accept thy person? saith the LORD of hosts." He writes (p. 124), "Now, let me ask you a simple question. If you were offering your ***very best*** to the emperor, what would it look like?"

Shall we ask Daniels the same question? If he were offering his very best effort to God—via the instruction of God's people—what would it look like? This book is riddled with problems, many of which stem from an unfamiliarity with manuscripts or actual research on Codex Sinaiticus. I am torn—I do not want to malign Daniels' character and suggest he is intentionally hiding information from his readers, but I also do not want to accuse him of being *that* poor of a researcher. The problem is that I am struggling to see any other option besides those two.

James writes, "My brethren, be not many masters, knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation." Those words should terrify anyone willing to publish a book so poorly researched as this one. We who are Christians should thank God that our hope is not in the quality of our research but in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

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